

03 SEP 1982

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MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]  
Office of External Affairs  
FROM: Bruce T. Johnson  
Chairman, Fine Arts Commission  
SUBJECT: Art in CIA  
REFERENCE: Your letter dated 26 August 1982

STAT [REDACTED]  
1. I have received your letter of 26 August and regret that our efforts to bring a variety of form and color to the public corridors of our building are so objectionable to you. I am sure you are aware that there are some who find that the paintings do have merit.

2. I assure you that the Fine Arts Commission is more than ready to, as you say, "give the traditionalists a chance." I believe that we demonstrate this willingness in the many exhibits which have been installed over time in the D corridor exhibition hall. It might interest you to know, also, that I tried to tap the resources of the Smithsonian Institution, in particular the National Museum of American Art, to gain access to large holdings of traditional American paintings. Unfortunately, there are legal prohibitions which make it impossible for works from that collection to be installed in any institution where they are not available to the public at large.

3. I continue to be open to ideas about sources of traditional art and if you have any ideas on this subject, I assure you they would be welcome. I will continue my efforts to bring variety to the exhibits mounted here but I will also continue to defend as totally appropriate to the architecture of our handsome building the continued use of modern art such as we now have on display.

4. Again, thank you for your interest in our program and please share with me any suggestions you have about sources of the kind of art which you would like to see displayed.

*Bruce T. Johnson*

Bruce T. Johnson

26 August 1982

Mr. Bruce Johnson, Chairman  
CIA Fine Arts Commission  
2D00 Headquarters Bldg.

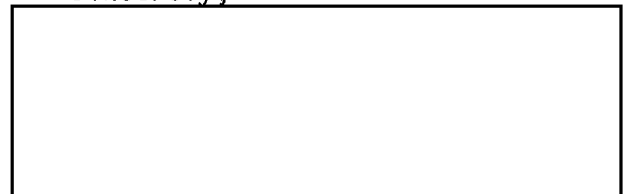
Dear Mr. Chairman:

I would like to pass along some of my thoughts with regard to the recent additions to the walls of Headquarters Building.

I don't appreciate modern or abstract art forms. I don't find them attractive or samples of artistic ability, although I can usually tolerate them when they are used for decorative purposes as part of a contemporary furniture or building scheme. Recently, however, the walls of the Headquarters Building abound with samples of the biggest conglomeration of junk my eyes have ever strained to see! I think that art, especially in a work environment, should bring pleasure to the eye and joy to the soul. Contrary to this, I find quite a few of the recent additions optical exercises, and the statue that stands near the main entrance puts me in a state of complete depression! Surely this is not conducive to good employee attitude and productivity.

Suggestion: Since the art displayed in this building is so one-sided, wouldn't it be only fair to give the traditionalists a chance? I am confident that if you took a survey of employees with regard to this, an overwhelming majority would prefer a change to a more conservative exhibit.

Sincerely,



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